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EXAMINER

RAMAKRISHNAIAH, MELUR

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2643

DATE MAILED: 04/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/633,266

Applicant(s)

LEONARD ET AL.

Examiner

Melur Ramakrishnaiah

Art Unit

2643

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 July 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2-21-2005</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-7, 15, 29, 30, 31-32, 35-36, 37, 38, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Okubo et al. (JP357061389A, hereinafter Okubo).

Regarding claim 1, Okubo discloses a video conference system, comprising; a first conference room and a second conference room, the conference rooms are electronically coupled to permit transmission of images from each room to the other room for viewing, each conference room having: a large format display system (4, figs. 8-9) for projecting images, and a first camera (1, figs. 8-9) positioned with respect to large format display system to capture an image of the conference room and a participant in the room, without substantially obscuring the participant's view of the large format display system, so as to provide perception that the participant in the room is looking directly at a participant in the other conference room (see abstract).

Regarding claim 29, Okubo discloses a method of video conferencing between a first conference and a second conference room, comprising: receiving in the first conference room an image of a second conference room, projecting the image onto to a first large format display system in the first conference room at or near life size, capturing an image of the first conference room and a participant in the first conference room, without substantially obscuring the participant's view of the first large format

display system, so as to provide the perception that the participant in the first conference room is looking directly at a participant in the second conference room, and transmitting the captured image to the second conference room for viewing (figs. 8-9, see abstract).

Regarding claim 30, Okubo discloses a method of video conferencing between a first conference and a second conference room, comprising: receiving in the first conference room an image of a second conference room, projecting the image onto to a first large format display system in the first conference room at or near life size, capturing an image of the first conference room and a participant in the first conference room, the participant having a line of sight to a medial portion of the first large format display system, the line of sight being within the field of view of an camera (1, figs. 8-9) in the first conference room and camera substantially hidden from view of the participant, and transmitting the captured image to the second conference room for viewing (see abstract).

Regarding claim 31, Okubo discloses a method of video conferencing between a first conference and a second conference room, comprising: receiving in the first conference room an image of a second conference room, projecting the image onto to a first large format display system in the first conference room at or near life size, capturing an image of the first conference room and a participant in the first conference room that is substantially medial to the first large format display system and at or above eye level of a participant, the camera substantially hidden from the view of the

participant in the conference room, and transmitting the captured image to the second conference room for viewing (figs. 8-9, see abstract).

Regarding claim 35, Okubo discloses a video conferencing system for coupling a first conference room and a second conference room, comprising: means for receiving in the first conference room an image of the second conference room, means (8, figs. 8-9) for projecting the image onto a first large format display system in the first conference room at or near life size, means (1, figs. 8-9) for capturing an image of the first conference room and a participant in the first conference room, without substantially obscuring the participant's view of large format display system, so as to provide the perception that the participant in the first conference room is looking directly at a participant in the second conference room, and means for transmitting the captured image to the second conference room for viewing (see abstract).

Regarding claim 37, Okubo discloses a video conferencing system for coupling a first conference room and a second conference room, comprising: means for receiving in the first conference room an image of the second conference room, means (8, figs. 8-9) for projecting the image onto a first large format display system in the first conference room at or near life size, means (1, figs. 8-9) for capturing an image of the first conference room and a participant in the first conference room, the participant having a line of sight to a medial portion of the first large format display system, the line of sight being within a field of view of an camera (1, figs. 8-9) in the first conference room and the camera substantially hidden from view of the participant, and means for transmitting the captured image to the second conference room for viewing (see abstract).

Regarding claim 38, Okubo discloses a video conferencing system for coupling a first conference room and a second conference room, comprising: means for receiving in the first conference room an image of the second conference room, means (8, figs. 8-9) for projecting the image onto a first large format display system in the first conference room at or near life size, means (1, figs. 8-9) for capturing an image of the first conference room using an camera (1) located at a position within the conference room that is substantially medial to the first large format display system and at or above eye level of the participant, the camera substantially hidden from the view of the participant in the conference room, and means for transmitting the captured image to the second conference room for viewing (figs. 8-9, see abstract).

Regarding claims 2-7, 15, Okubo further teaches the following: camera is substantially hidden from the view of the participant in the conference room (figs. 8-9), camera is located substantially medial to the large format display system and at or eye level of a participant in the conference room, camera is substantially hidden from the view of the participant in the conference room (figs. 8-9), the large format display system has an aperture (5, figs. 8-9), the camera (1, figs. 8-9) located behind the aperture, aperture (5, figs. 8-9) is located at a height at or above eye level of the participants and at a horizontal position at or near horizontal middle of the large format display system, aperture (5, figs. 8-9) is located so as to coincide with visually insignificant area of the image of the other conference room as displayed on the large format display system visually insignificant area corresponds to an image of an unobtrusive object located in the other conference room, large format display system

displays an approximately life-size image of the other conference room (figs. 8-9, see abstract).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 8-9, 17-19, 33, 39-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Allen et al. (US PAT: 5,751,337, hereinafter Allen).

Regarding claims 8-9, Okuba does not teach the following: each conference room is electronically coupled to transmit sound and to receive sound from the other conference room, an audio capture system for capturing audio from the conference room, the audio capture system having a microphone, and an audio amplification system for projecting audio in the conference room, the audio amplification system having a speaker.

However, Allen teaches the following: each conference room is electronically coupled to transmit sound and to receive sound from the other conference room, an audio capture system for capturing audio from the conference room, the audio capture system having a microphone, and an audio amplification system for projecting audio in the conference room, the audio amplification system having a speaker (fig. 1, col. 8 lines 54-66, col. 10 lines 49-56).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for the following: each conference room is electronically coupled to transmit sound and to receive sound from the other conference room, an audio capture system for capturing audio from the conference room, the audio capture system having a microphone, and an audio amplification system for projecting audio in the conference room, the audio amplification system having a speaker as this arrangement would facilitate video conferencing accompanied by audio, thus providing realistic conference atmosphere.

Regarding claims 17-19, Okuba does not teach the following; the first and second conference rooms contain similar: furnishings, the furnishings arranged and located within the room in a manner to provide the perception of participants sharing a same physical space, wall color and surfaces to provide the perception of participants sharing a same physical space, the first and conference rooms are lighted to provide the perception of participants sharing a same physical space and optimize the clarity of an image captured.

However, Allen teaches the following: the first and second conference rooms contain similar: furnishings, the furnishings arranged and located within the room in a manner to provide the perception of participants sharing a same physical space, wall color and surfaces to provide the perception of participants sharing a same physical space (fig. 1, col. 5, line 63 – col. 6, line 59), the first and conference rooms are lighted to provide the perception of participants sharing a same physical space and optimize the clarity of an image captured (col. 5 lines 7-9, col. 6 lines 10-12).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for the following: the first and second conference rooms contain similar: furnishings, the furnishings arranged and located within the room in a manner to provide the perception of participants sharing a same physical space, wall color and surfaces to provide the perception of participants sharing a same physical space, the first and conference rooms are lighted to provide the perception of participants sharing a same physical space and optimize the clarity of an image captured as this arrangement would contribute towards providing predetermined sensory setting at conference centers as taught by Allen, thus enhancing the conferencing experience for the participants.

Regarding claim 39, Okuba discloses a method of manufacturing a video conference system between two rooms, the method comprising: placing a large format display system (4, figs. 8-9) in each room, placing a first camera (1, figs. 8-9) in each room in a position within the room that is substantially medial to the large format display system and at or about eye level of a participant in the room, the camera (1, figs. 8-9) substantially hidden from the view of participant in the room, and electronically coupling the two rooms together to bidirectionally communicate video information (figs. 8-9).

Okuba differs from claims 33, 39 in that he does not explicitly show the following: receiving in the first conference room sound from the second conference room, projecting the received sound into the first conference room, capturing the sound in the first conference room, and transmitting the captured sound to the second conference

room for projection in the second conference room, audio information being exchanged between the conference rooms.

However, Allen discloses teleconferencing method and system for providing face-to-face non-animated teleconference environment which teaches the following: receiving in the first conference room sound from the second conference room, projecting the received sound into the first conference room, capturing the sound in the first conference room, and transmitting the captured sound to the second conference room for projection in the second conference room, audio information being exchanged between the conference rooms (fig. 1, col. 8 lines 54-66, col. 10 lines 49-56).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for exchange of audio information between two conference rooms as this arrangement would provide for full fledged conference with audio and video exchange between the conference participants, thus making the conference realistic.

Regarding claim 40, Okuba does not teach the following: furnishing the rooms with substantially similar furnishings, the furnishings arranged in a substantially similar manner, including similar furniture, lights, wall color and wall surfaces.

However, Allen teaches the following: furnishing the rooms with substantially similar furnishings, the furnishings arranged in a substantially similar manner, including similar furniture, lights, wall color and wall surfaces (fig. 1, col. 5, line 63 – col. 6, line 59).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for the following: furnishing the rooms with substantially similar furnishings, the furnishings arranged in a substantially similar manner, including similar furniture, lights, wall color and wall surfaces as this arrangement would contribute towards providing predetermined sensory setting at conference centers as taught by Allen, thus enhancing the conferencing experience for the participants.

5. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Chen et al. (US PAT: 5,953,053, hereinafter Chen).

Okuba differs from claim 13 in that although he teaches the following: large format display system comprises a projection display device and a projection screen (4, figs. 8-9), the screen having a front and a back, the front of the screen facing the conference room, screen having the aperture for receiving the lens of the camera (fig. 1, see abstract); but he does not teach the following: the projection display device located behind the screen, facing the back of the screen.

However, Chen discloses teleconference system with visual display terminal which teaches the following: the projection display device located behind the screen, facing the back of the screen (fig. 1 col. 3 lines 1-45).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for the following: the projection display device located behind the screen, facing the back of the screen as

this arrangement would provide means for alternative implementation of projection display as taught by Chen.

6. Claims 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Allen as applied to claim 9 above, and further in view of Yoshida (JP 401049490A).

Regarding claims 10-11, the combination does not teach the following: the audio capture system comprises plurality of microphones distributed throughout the conference room, the audio amplification system comprises a plurality of speakers distributed around the conference room so the audio seems to emit from an image of a participant on the large format display system, wherein the audio capture system and the audio amplification system are capable of permitting simultaneous dialog between the participants in the first conference room and the second conference room wherein one speaker of the audio amplification system is located behind large format display system at a height at or near the height of an image of a participant on the large format display system.

However, Yoshida discloses television conference system which teaches the following: the audio capture system comprises plurality of microphones (25-1 ... 25-3, fig. 1) distributed throughout the conference room, the audio amplification system comprises a plurality of speakers (16-1 ... 16-3, fig. 1) distributed around the conference room so the audio seems to emit from an image of a participant on the large format display system, wherein the audio capture system and the audio amplification system are capable of permitting simultaneous dialog between the participants in the first

conference room and the second conference room wherein one speaker (16, fig. 1) of the audio amplification system is located behind large format display system (reads on television receiver 12, fig. 1) at a height at or near the height of an image of a participant on the large format display system.

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify the combination to provide for the following: the audio capture system comprises plurality of microphones distributed throughout the conference room, the audio amplification system comprises a plurality of speakers distributed around the conference room so the audio seems to emit from an image of a participant on the large format display system, wherein the audio capture system and the audio amplification system are capable of permitting simultaneous dialog between the participants in the first conference room and the second conference room wherein one speaker of the audio amplification system is located behind large format display system at a height at or near the height of an image of a participant on the large format display system as this arrangement as this arrangement would facilitate providing ambience to the participants as taught by Yoshida, thus facilitating recognition of speaking person easily in a video conference.

7. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Allen, Yoshida as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of Harada (JP02001309377A).

Regarding claim 12, the combination does not teach the following: at least one microphone is located in or on a surface of a table located in the conference room.

However, Harada discloses conference record guarantee system which teaches the following: at least one microphone (3, fig. 1) is located in or on a surface of a table located in the conference room (see abstract).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify the combination to provide for the following: at least one microphone is located in or on a surface of a table located in the conference room as this arrangement would provide one way of arranging microphones, among many possible ways, in a conference system to facilitate conferencing as taught by Harada.

8. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Allen as applied to claim 19 above, and further in view of Loughrey (US PAT: 6,561,678).

Regarding claim 20, the combination does not teach the following: plurality of overhead indirect lighting fixtures, a plurality of side indirect lighting fixtures, conference room table, and an light source attached underneath the conference table.

However, Loughrey discloses variable focus indirect lighting fixture which discloses the following: arranging lighting needs for a conference room depending upon the conference activity (col. 2 lines 17-28).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify the combination to provide for the following: plurality of overhead indirect lighting fixtures, a plurality of side indirect lighting fixtures, conference room table, and an light source attached underneath the conference table as this arrangement would provide one way of providing lighting, among many possible ways,

to the conference room to meet different lighting needs of the conference depending upon conference activity as taught by Loughrey.

9. Claims 16, 21-23 and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Westfield (US PAT: 6,677,979, filed 6-12-2001).

Regarding claims 16, 21-23, Okuba does not teach the following: conference room further comprises a second camera for capturing with high fidelity resolution an image of an item located at a pre-determined location within the conference room, the second camera is a high definition camera, the second camera is located where it can focus on the pre-determined location within the conference room, the pre-determined location being the place where the item requiring high fidelity resolution capture may be placed, capturing a high fidelity resolution image of an item at a predetermined location within the second conference room, transmitting the captured high fidelity resolution to the first conference room, receiving in the first conference room the captured high fidelity resolution image and projecting in the first conference room the captured high fidelity resolution image for viewing.

However, Westfield discloses method and apparatus for dual image video teleconferencing which teaches the following: conference room further comprises a second camera (420, fig. 4) for capturing with high fidelity resolution an image of an item located at a pre-determined location within the conference room, the second camera is a high definition camera, the second camera is located where it can focus on the pre-determined location within the conference room, the pre-determined location being the place where the item requiring high fidelity resolution capture may be placed,

Art Unit: 2643

capturing a high fidelity resolution image of an item at a predetermined location within the second conference room, transmitting the captured high fidelity resolution to the first conference room, receiving in the first conference room the captured high fidelity resolution image and projecting in the first conference room the captured high fidelity resolution image for viewing (col. 4 lines 21-51).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for the following: conference room further comprises a second camera for capturing with high fidelity resolution an image of an item located at a pre-determined location within the conference room, the second camera is a high definition camera, the second camera is located where it can focus on the pre-determined location within the conference room, the pre-determined location being the place where the item requiring high fidelity resolution capture may be placed, capturing a high fidelity resolution image of an item at a predetermined location within the second conference room, transmitting the captured high fidelity resolution to the first conference room, receiving in the first conference room the captured high fidelity resolution image and projecting in the first conference room the captured high fidelity resolution image for viewing as this arrangement would provide choice for the user to select camera to obtain high resolution images of areas of interest in a conference as taught by Westfield (see abstract).

10. Claims 24-25, 28, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Wakabayshi et al. (JP409205626A, hereinafter Wakabayshi).

Regarding claims 24-25, 28, Okuba does not teach the following: a half mirror beam splitter oriented at an angle with respect to the large format display system and positioned near the horizontal middle of the large format display system and at or about eye level of the participant in the conference room and the participant and project the image into the lens of the camera, a half mirror beam splitter oriented with respect to the large format display system and positioned such that line of sight of a participant in one room to an image on the large format display system of a participant in another room passes through the mirror beam splitter to provide perception of the participant looking directly at the participant in the other conference room, half mirror beam splitter is located at a height at or near the eye level of the participant in the conference room.

However, Wakabayshi discloses face to face image pickup display system and video camera therefor which teaches the following: a half mirror beam splitter (9, fig. 1) oriented at an angle with respect to the large format display system and positioned near the horizontal middle of the large format display system (1, fig. 1) and at or about eye level of the participant in the conference room and the participant and project the image into the lens of the camera, a half mirror beam splitter oriented with respect to the large format display system and positioned such that line of sight of a participant in one room to an image on the large format display system of a participant in another room passes through the mirror beam splitter to provide perception of the participant looking directly at the participant in the other conference room, half mirror beam splitter is located at a height at or near the eye level of the participant in the conference room (fig. 1, see abstract).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for the following: a half mirror beam splitter oriented at an angle with respect to the large format display system and positioned near the horizontal middle of the large format display system and at or about eye level of the participant in the conference room and the participant and project the image into the lens of the camera, a half mirror beam splitter oriented with respect to the large format display system and positioned such that line of sight of a participant in one room to an image on the large format display system of a participant in another room passes through the mirror beam splitter to provide perception of the participant looking directly at the participant in the other conference room, half mirror beam splitter is located at a height at or near the eye level of the participant in the conference room as this arrangement would provide an alternative means to accomplish line of sight of video conferencing as taught by Wakabayashi, thus contributing towards more realistic video conferencing.

11. Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Leenders et al. (JP02000003139A, hereinafter Leenders) and Hirasawa (JP02000333067A).

Okuba differs from claim 26 in that although he teaches an aperture (5, fig. 1) located horizontally medial in the large format display system, where the camera is behind the aperture (see abstract); he does not teach the following: the aperture having an anti-reflective, transparent cover.

However, Leenders discloses antireflective material used for lessening the reflection of an information display (fig. 1, see abstract); and Hirasawa discloses transparent cover (4, fig. 1) for camera (fig. 1, see abstract).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for the following: the apertrure having an anti-reflective, transparent cover as this arrangement would protect the lens from dust and also reduce reflections from the cover so that user is not subject to reflections which might disturb his posture, thus contributing obtaining good picture of the conferee facing the display.

12. Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Wakabayshi as applied to claim 24 above, and further in view of Toritsuka (JP408214271A).

Regarding claim 27, the combination does not teach the following: half mirror beam splitter is at least partially transparent, providing the participants in the conference room a substantially unobstructed view of the display system.

However, Toritsuka discloses video conference system which teaches the following: half mirror beam splitter (8, fig. 1) is at least partially transparent, providing the participants in the conference room a substantially unobstructed view of the display system (1, fig. 1, see abstract).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify the combination to provide for the following: half mirror beam splitter is at least partially transparent, providing the participants in the conference

room a substantially unobstructed view of the display system as this arrangement would provide line of sight video conferencing with clear view of display as taught by Toritsuka.

13. Claims 14, 41-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuba in view of Kamakura (JP401032290A) and Allen.

Regarding claim 41, Okuba discloses a method of manufacturing a video conference system between two rooms, the method comprising: placing a large format display system (4, figs. 8-9) in each room the format display system having a projection screen (4, figs. 8-9), placing a first camera (1, figs. 8-9) in a position within each room so that participant in the room has a line of sight to a medial position of large format display system, the line of sight being within the field of view of the first camera in the room, the camera is substantially hidden from the view of the participant in the room, and electronically coupling the two rooms together to bidirectionally communicate video information (figs. 8-9, see abstract).

Okuba differs from claim 14 and 41 in that he does not teach the following: projection screen is substantially the front wall of the room, projection screen disposed along or into a wall of the room; and audio information being exchanged between the conference rooms.

However, Kamakura discloses projection type display device which teaches the following: projection screen is substantially the front wall of the room, projection screen disposed along or into a wall of the room (figs. 1, see abstract); and Allen teaches the following: audio information being exchanged between the conference rooms (fig. 1, col. 8 lines 54-66).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for the following: projection screen is substantially the front wall of the room, projection screen disposed along or into a wall of the room as this arrangement would provide display device which is unobtrusive, which provides better setting for conferencing; and audio information being exchanged between the conference rooms as this arrangement would provide for full fledged conference with audio and video exchange between the conference participants, thus making the conference realistic.

Regarding claim 42, Okuba does not teach the following: furnishing the rooms with substantially similar furnishings, the furnishings arranged in a substantially similar manner, including similar furniture, lights, wall color and wall surfaces.

However, Allen teaches the following: furnishing the rooms with substantially similar furnishings, the furnishings arranged in a substantially similar manner, including similar furniture, lights, wall color and wall surfaces (fig. 1, col. 5, line 63 – col. 6, line 59).

Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time invention was made to modify Okuba's system to provide for the following: furnishing the rooms with substantially similar furnishings, the furnishings arranged in a substantially similar manner, including similar furniture, lights, wall color and wall surfaces as this arrangement would contribute towards providing predetermined sensory setting at conference centers as taught by Allen, thus enhancing the conferencing experience for the participants.

Art Unit: 2643

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melur Ramakrishnaiah whose telephone number is (703) 305-1461. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:30-4:00; every other F Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Curtis Kuntz can be reached on (703)305-4708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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